



*For the health of your children*

**This Saturday: The 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Dr. Roberto B. Bryson Symposium**

The Horacio E. Oduber Hospital is conducting an informative symposium on “Child Obesity” this Saturday at the Cas di Cultura. It has been organized and is chaired by Dr. Joel Rajnherc, pediatrician, and is in honor of Dr. Roberto B. Bryson, pediatrician, who recently retired from a distinguished career of twenty-eight years serving the Aruban community.

During a press conference at the hospital on Monday afternoon, Dr. Rajnherc, along with Bob Harms and Dr. M.L. van der Griendt-Okijk of the hospital staff extended an invitation to the public to attend the daylong symposium. A number of general practice pediatricians and specialists will have a place on the dais, offering vital information regarding a serious health concern for now and the future.

Dr. Rajnherc imparted the alarming statistic that now thirty percent of Aruba’s children can be categorized as “obese.” This degree of being overweight at a young age is the forerunner of serious illness, which can manifest as early as teenage years or young adulthood, diabetes in particular. Type two diabetes, normally only found after the age of forty is now becoming epidemic in young people and this can be directly linked to childhood obesity. In addition, cardiovascular disease is also a consequence of being obese from a young age. Both of these dreaded diseases, never seen before under a certain age, are now showing an alarming increase amongst our youth.

The seminar will begin at 8:00 AM with registration, and the doctors suggest interested parents arrive early, as seating in the Cas di Cultura is limited. The symposium is being conducted absolutely free of charge. The morning session will begin promptly at 9:00 A.M and includes Dr. Eric Arends, pediatrician, with a general practice in Aruba, Dr. Sonia Faries, pediatric endocrinologist and Dr. S.M. Lo-A-Njoe, pediatric cardiologist, both from Curacao. Each will give a half-hour presentation, then there will be a Panel discussion, and they will answer questions from the audience.

After a lunch break the afternoon session will begin at noon with a presentation by Christa Bryson, dietician, and will continue with Dr. W. Sykes, doctor of medicine and psychiatry of New York.. Richard Visser, doctor of holistic medicine, of Aruba, will finish the program before a final panel discussion. The seminar is scheduled to end at 2:00 P.M.

During the announcement of the symposium, Dr. Rajnherc cited the myriad problems, not only concerning the health of our children, which childhood obesity creates. Demands on the health care system, and the increase of medical costs to individual families is skyrocketing. Diabetes is the number one cause of blindness in the United States, and can contribute to cardiovascular disease, resulting in the amputation of limbs. A serious increase in this problem is now being seen in women under thirty-five, according to an article published in the New York Times this past year. Diabetes can affect any and every aspect of the body, causing a wealth of diabetes related syndromes that are life threatening. Organizers of the symposium emphasized the serious concerns they have for the health of the generation coming into their twenties at present, as there is a point when the affects of childhood obesity and the life style that creates it cannot be reversed. Along with Dr. Bryson, they expressed their hope that concerned parents attend the conference, and learn what they need to do to protect their children from the dangerous practices that are creating this situation, which of course includes regularly frequently fast food franchises.

So for the health of your children, make time on Saturday to attend this very important event. More information and a program can be obtained at the Horacio E. Oduber Hospital’s Public Relations offices from Bob Harms, or by calling 587-4300 extension 364, or cellular 568-2135.